

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

Board Members
Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board
525 W. Jefferson St., 2nd Fl.
Springfield, IL 62761

Dr. Terry Mason
Chief Operating Officer
Cook County Department of Public Health
15900 S. Cicero Avenue – Administration
Oak Forest, IL 60452

April 18, 2019

Dear IL HFSRB Board Members and Dr. Terry Mason,

I am reaching out to express my concern with the status and proposed closure of Westlake Hospital located at 1225 W. Lake Street, Melrose Park, IL, 60160. While I am pleased a temporary restraining order requiring that the hospital remain open was ordered by the Court, serious concerns remain and I urge the Cook County Department of Public Health to exercise full and thorough oversight into the handling of Pipeline Health's acquisition and proposed closure of the Westlake Hospital.

In an earlier statement, Pipeline Health cited its "[in]ability to continue maintaining a safe environment for patient care citing a "declining staff rate" as a primary reason for the temporary suspension of services at the hospital. Given that the hospital will now remain open, I am deeply concerned with how Pipeline plans to address these staffing shortages and ultimately, with the quality of care of current patients.

I join state legislators, municipal officials, local community organizations, faith-based groups, physicians, and patients in Melrose Park who want to ensure that the Cook County Department of Public Health provide proper oversight and mitigate the risk of adverse health outcomes for those currently relying on the health care services provided by Westlake Hospital, during the temporary stay of the facility's closure and after the facility closes, should that occur. I expect that the Illinois Health Facilities and Services Review Board will closely scrutinize the application.

Additionally, Cook County should demand that Pipeline Health provide a detailed outline of their plan to care for the patients they are currently serving as well as their plan to provide job security for the personnel they encouraged to leave the hospital.

Westlake Hospital is a critical community asset for Melrose Park and the surrounding communities that rely on the services they provide; the warranted outrage among community leaders in the last few weeks is a testament to its vital role in the area. I thank you in advance and hope to hear from you soon. If you have any questions, please contact my District Director at 773.297.1039 or Patty.Garcia@mail.house.gov. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Jesús "Chuy" García
Member of Congress
Illinois' 4th Congressional District

CC: Mayor Ronald M. Serpico, Melrose Park
Pipeline Health